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ABSTRACT

The booklet describes the philosophy and operation of the Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch School Program, an integrated public school residential treatment mainstream educational model located within an accredited residential psychiatric facility in Montana. The therapeutic milieu is designed to redirect children's self-perception. Descriptive information of the school's model and philosophy is followed by a discussion of its mainstream continuum of educational placement, the mission statement, and goals and objectives (teaching self-esteem; personal/social skills; personal/social capabilities, attitudes, and values; life survival skills; and vocational skills). Additional program components explored include the following: the school paradigm for success, data based management, results and accountability, the success programing cycle, assessment, individualized education program (IEP) development, programing interventions (description of a typical day), IEP review, structures and program (the curriculum), ungraded classrooms, discipline and motivation systems, self-control instruction, re-entry curriculum, staff development, tool skills, outreach training, and an anti-burnout staff program. (CL)

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GROWING PEOPLE: A Model That Works

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A people growing school

Welcome to Success

The School Program Narrative
of the
Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch School

An Integrated Public School Residential Treatment
Mainstream Educational Model Located within an Accredited Residential Psychiatric Facility

Individualized Education Programming for Emotionally Handicapped Students

YELLOWSTONE BOYS AND GIRLS RANCH SCHOOL
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APPENDICES

(These are three separate additions to this narrative)

A. Results
B. Philosophy
C. Forms

PURPOSE OF THE NARRATIVE

We have a large number of requests for written information about our program. This document has been prepared to help the reader, layperson and professional, get a feel for the philosophy, enviroment and the actual programming structures of our model. It is designed to provide an overview for sending school districts - and a part of our training program for visiting educators. We hope you will find it informative.

ABOUT THE STUDENTS

Labels are distancing phenomena

What good is reading a narrative on programs for children without knowing what the students are like. This short introduction is to give the reader an understanding of School District No. 58's children.

The entire student population of School District No. 58 has been identified, by a Special Education Evaluation Child Study Team, as having such severe emotional impairments that a residential self-contained treatment classroom specializing in remediating emotional/behaviorial problems has been determined as the most appropriate and least restrictive educational placement for the students.

They are not surviving.

They have lost control over their lives.

Our staff feels strongly that labels are all too often distancing phenomenon and are not very descriptive of an individual person. The label "emotionally disturbed" does not tell us much.Students come to us with very poor track records. Most of their psychological and educational needs have not been met. They have been described as "uncontrollable", "weird", "difficult to reach", "withdrawn", "educationaily crippled", and "crazy". Most students have a long history of school failure. They have not made it in the normal school environment. Many students have beeen expelled from school. A large number have a historu of assaults on teachers. Without exception, they have a very low concept of themselves. For the average child, Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch is his/her fourth home. One child has been in nine foster home and adopted three times. He is 14 years old. Many of our children are headed toward a lifetime of anguish and despair. They are troubled, difficult, and failure-oriented children. They are not surviving. They have lost control of their own lives. Intervention at Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch is the last chance for most of our children. It is our job to provide them with skills to survive life. It is our goal to turn potential liabilities into assets of society.

We redirect their self perception.

As the narrative below indicates, the theraputic milieu of all the programs here at the ranch is designed to redirect each child's self perception and direct them toward a positive growth-oriented, loving, healthy life. We feel that self-esteem is learned, therefore, it can be taught. We want our youth to become people who can negotiate life successfully.

ABOUT THE RANCH

Self Esteem is learned, therefore, it can be taught.

Located eight miles west of Billings, Montana, a city of 100,000 people, Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals (JCAH), National Association for Homes for Children (NAHC) and CHAMPUS, as a psychiatric facility for emotionally disturbed children and youth. The ranch provides a full compliment of programs to meet the unique needs of each child. Holistic treatment is provided here. Created in 1956, the ranch has served hundreds of youth. In 1961 the Montana Legislature created a special public school district designed to specifically meet on the school component of the 24 hour residential treatment program at the ranch. A separate Y.B.G.R. program narrative describes the total theraputic milieu. Of specific importance is the overall ranch philisophy of caring, which is symbolized in the ranch motto noted in Figure I below.

If you think you can or you can't, you're right.

Figure 1: THE RANCH MOTTO

"It Sure Makes a Difference when you Know Somebody Cares"

Caring

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

A school needs a blueprint - a plan.

We feel a school needs a blueprint - a plan - a direction. This narrative outlines our model. Clearly, one of the key ingredients is a "core mission" agreed upon by the entire staff. A school must know where it is going or it will end up somewhere else. All too often schools are like rudderless ships which drift aimlessly toward segmented, unrelated, unknown ends. Our shcool moves with a purpose. It has a rudder, a motor, a compass, a steering wheel, a star (and yes, even a lighthouse). We design specific school programs with direction to meet the identified needs for each student at the ranch. The school is one component of the many components of our holistic, theraputic milieu here at the ranch.

We are not a rudderless ship.

The milieu has great efficacy.

From liabilities to assets.

We must not become infec.ed by our student's feelings.

Laughter is critical to high self esteem.

As indicated in the Mission Statement and in school goals noted below, the school has clearly defined its direction. It is not a rudderless ship. All teaching-learning episodes for students are designed to meet these goals. The blueprint - the description of - how we meet these goals has been called in the past the "Yellowstone Mainstream Model".

All teachers in the school are State of Montana certified special education teachers. They are specialists in teaching emotionally handicapped/behavior disturbed/troubled/disruptive youth. The school is accredited by the State of Montana Office of Public Instruction. The ranch knows what it is about and where it is going. Because of this, we've found the milieu has great efficacy.

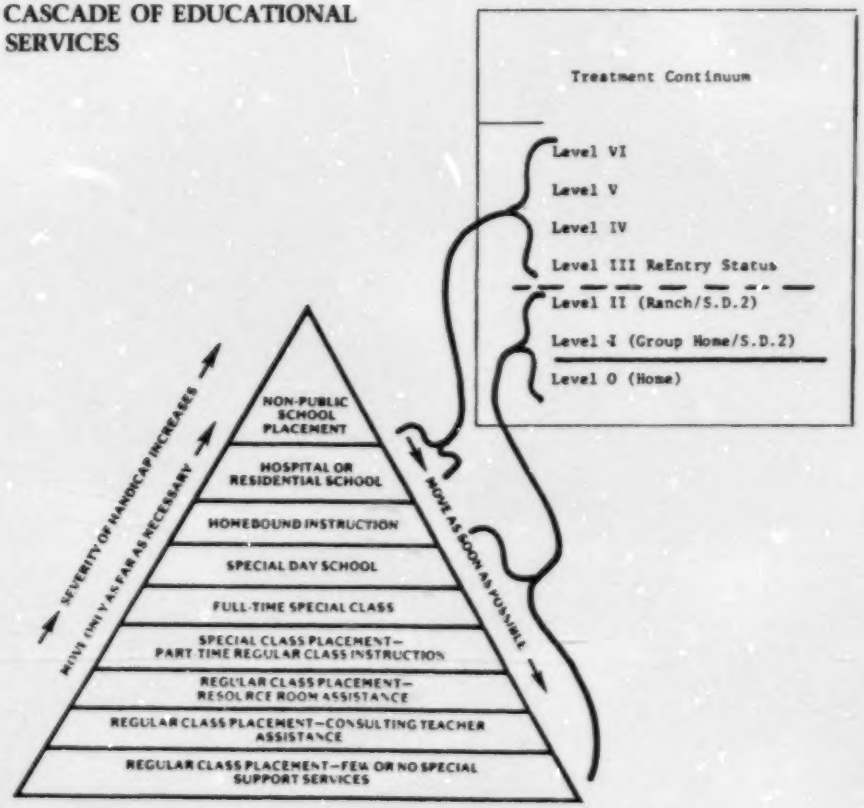
Philosophically, we believe people are first. We are in the business of turning potential liabilities of society into assets for society. Sign plaster our walls such as "Welcome to Success", "Self Esteem Taught Here". The four most important words in the school on one sign which reads "Catch Them Being Good."

Our staff development and our anti-burnout programs described are designed to increase staff self-esteem. We guard on a daily basis, against the rubbing off of the low self esteem of our students onto ourselves. We must not become infected by student feelings. We laugh a lot. We consider laughter to be crucial in the maintenance and growth of our self esteem. We even have a humor library. In fact, humor is one of the 17 personal social skills we teach. Teachers must believe that their students are in the process of becoming and that their job is to open the doors so that their students can obtain the needed survival skills to successfully negotiate life as fully functioning adults. From our perspective the purpose of education is to each student how to successfully negotiate the world.

II. PROGRAM NARRATIVE SECTION
A SPECIAL EDUCATION

All students are in "Special Education" and as such are programmed for under the Federal and State guidelines for handicapped children. The school is in total compliance with Public Law 9A-142. Considered a presidential school, it is located at the top of the special education "Cascade of Educational Services" as noted in Figure 2 below. We strongly believe in the mainstreaming principle. If you visit our school you will see that this guiding principle permeates the climate.

Figure 2
CASCADE OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES


Treatment Continuum
Level VI
Level V
Level IV
Level III ReEntry Status
Level II (Ranch/S.D.2)
Level I (Group Home/S.D.2)
Level 0 (Home)
SEVERITY OF HANDICAP INCREASES
MOVE ONLY AS FAR AS NECESSARY
MOVE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL PLACEMENT
HOSPITAL OR RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL
HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION
SPECIAL DAY SCHOOL
FULL-TIME SPECIAL CLASS
SPECIAL CLASS PLACEMENT– PART TIME REGULAR CLASS INSTRUCTION
REGULAR CLASS PLACEMENT– RESOURCE ROOM ASSISTANCE
REGULAR CLASS PLACEMENT–CONSULTING TEACHER ASSISTANCE
REGULAR CLASS PLACEMENT–FEW OR NO SPECIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

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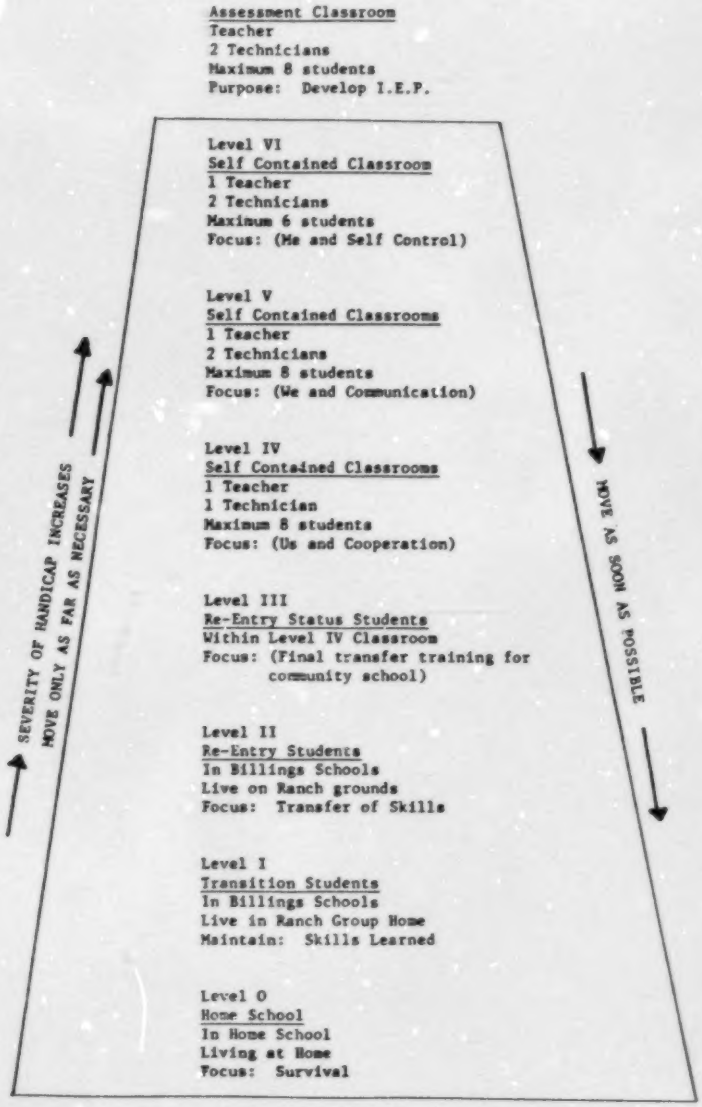
They now "try out" for the mainstream school.

The structure of the school with all its classroom levels helps us actualize the mainstreaming principle. In compliance with the Federal Special Education law and Montana Rules for Handicapped Youth, twelve self-contained classrooms are arranged in four levels along a continum from more supportive (restrictive) to less supportive (restrictive). Each level has a different focus. The Level VI classroom focus is on "me and self control". The Level V classrooms focus on "we and communication". The Level IV classroom focus is on "us and cooperation". Within a Level IV classroom, students can obtain what is called a Level III placement status. This means that a student is now officially "trying out" for the mainstream school. As indicated on the cascade of educational services, YBGR school is the most supportive (restrictive) setting possible. To the right of the pyramid are indicated classroom levels used within our school. Figure 3 below is our school mainstream schemata which includes the assessment classroom, the six levels, the staffing patterns and the focus. This mainstream level of classroom structure has been determined to be a major reason for the success of our students.

Figure 3 MAINSTREAM CONTINUUM OF EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT



Each level has a focus

The structure helps actualize the mainstreatm model.

MISSION STATEMENT AND GOAL

Part of the glue that holds us together is our agreed upon core mission.

As mentioned above, we do not consider ourselves a rudderless ship. Part of the glue that holds us all together is an agreed upon mission statement and our school goals and objectives. These are noted below in Figures 4 and 5.

Teachers must believe in the process of becomming.

Figure 4: MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the school to give our students the skills, capacities, attitudes and values needed to successfully negotiate the world. We teach self esteem. We do this by establishing a helping relationship within which we teach essential life survival skills. The skills taught are behavioral in nature as is the programming design for each student. As each student improves we move him/her to a less supportive (less restrictive) educational placement. Our ultimate goal is to successfully "mainstream" each student back into a community based school.

Figure 5: SCHOOLS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of the school is to successfully mainstream each student back into a community based school facility. This goal has the below objectives which are addressed on a daily basis for each student:

a. Teaching Self Esteem
b. Teaching Personal/Social Skills
c. Teaching Personal/Social capacities, attitudes and values
d. Teaching Life Survival Skills
e. Teaching Vocational Skills

SCHOOL PARADIGM FOR SUCCESS

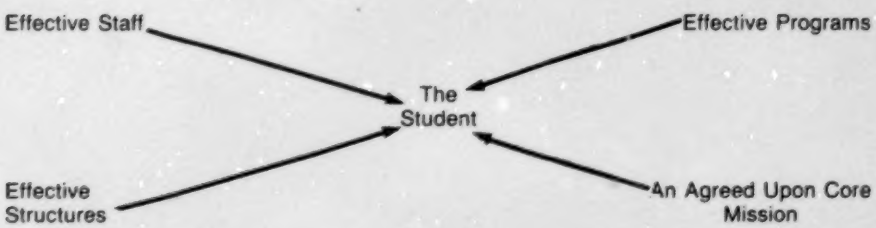
The orchestration of a climate for growth is the major task of the school administration. We adopt the ecological model of emotional disturbance etiology and remediation, as we feel it has the most operational use for educators. We do not see ourselves as human archeologists. We are educators. The word "educate" comes from the Latin word "instruere" which means to "put into"-prepare. Our daily teaching is a balance of "putting into" and "leading out".

"Putting into" and "leading out"

The program has now evolved to the point where we have percolated out four major structures, which put together, define our paradigm for success. These four ingredients are noted in Figure 6.

Figure 6 SCHOOL PARADIGM FOR SUCCESS

The School Paradigm



The most important element is an effective staff

The first element, which is by far and above the most important, is an "Effective Staff". The teacher in a psychiatric residential setting must meet many extra demands. He/she must not only unite with the demands of the less restrictive regular school system and the demands of effectively teaching within a theraputic community, but also cope with the ever demanding, draining influence of the emotionally handicapped youth. The staff in our school is outstanding. You will never find a more effective group of professional educators. We are proud of them. We expect the best from them and from our students. We "Catch Them Being Good". We "Teach Self Esteem". With our "tough love" orientation we get results.

A second key element in the paradigm is an agreed upon "Core Mission". We believe "If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up somewhere else." The school knows where it is going. Our structure is clear and consistent for students. Our belief system is formulated into the mission statement and school goals located above.

Expect the best

The third key element is "Effective Programs". Our school is permeated with group and individualized programs. Many of these programs are described below under the programming cycle section. The fourth key element is "Effective Structures", which hold the school programs together. A number of these structures are also described below.

DATA BASED MANAGEMENT

Orchestration of the environment

We are data based as much as possible in our daily and long range decision making. We orchestrate an environment for success by seeking key facts in decision making. For example, the principal collects monthly school wide data on: I.E.P. objectives met for each student; mainstream movements forward and backward; the number of points earned daily per student; the daily rate of positive over negative point entries (a 16:1 ratio average);

Key Variables:

A monthly school "P & L" statement

the number of students on the 3 different motivation systems; the number of In School Suspensions, Time Outs and Seclusions. These monthly facts together are called 'key variables". These are considered similiar to a monthly profit and loss statement used in the business world. A monthly school "P & L" statement is unique for a school.

Teachers and students place data each day onto behavior and precision teaching charts. Samples of these are noted in the Appendix. We have found logrithmic cycle charts to be most useful for daily decision making and for presentation of student growth to the participants at I.E.P. meetings, weekly lodge team meetings and the quarterly interdisciplinary psychiatric treatment team meetings. As you read this the programming cycle section you will see how charted data is used to provide the climate that, in fact, does cause growth.

School wide I.E.P. results published 4 times/years

Besides the movement and grade point data, our I.E.P. results data tells us how we are doing. School wide I.E.P. review results are obtained and published four times a year. I.E.P. review meetings are held for each student in October, December, February and April. Our students are in a continual state of flux. Because of our commitment we consider the "Formal Meeting" as a team with the student present to be one fo the most important structures we have in our success model. At the meetings the I.E.P. manager, the teacher, leads the review. We revise and change the I.E.P. to meet the need. On the average the school reviews 300 student annual goals, 800 student short term objectives and 300 student behaviorial objectives during the review month. Results indicate that students successfully meet between 63-67% of their specific behavioral objectives each time reviews are held. The third page of our I.E.P. is designed to help teachers collect data easily by using the provided chart right on the form.

RESULTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

We move students forward and backward along the continuum

We move students forward and backward along the mainstream continum. Figures 2 and 3 above indicate 6 levels of mainstream placements. Student movement data from 1978 to the present is located in the Appendix. As you can see from the chart, 85 of the moves are forward to less supportive placement and 15 are backward to more supportive placement. More detailed graphs and charts of our results are located in the Appendix.

Our goal is to "Mainstream" each student out of our school into a community based school. We call students in this placement "re-entry students" (Status Level III). They are close to the goal of "town school". The school averages 22 re-entry placements per year into nearby Billings community based public schools. The Billings schools have a very positive cooperative attitude with our students. 22 per year from our average number belonging of 85 is a high number. Of the 22 re-entered students each year, 17 survive and 5 need to return to us for more training. This is a recidivism rate of 18% and a success rate of 82%. The students in the 18% category not only socially survive in the community based school where they had previously failed, but they also average a 2.3 (C+) grade point average. This is significantly higher than their grade point average of .04 (F) that they average prior to our 14 months of intervention.

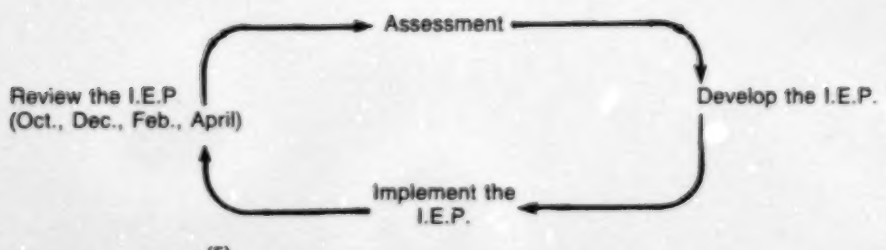
Average of 47 forward moves and 7 backward moves each year.

Internally, we have more mainstream moves than externally each year. We average 47 moves forward per year to less supportive classroom placements and 7 backward moves per year to more supportive classrooms for an 86% to 84% ratio. Note that we use the term "supportive" rather than "restrictive". The Appendix indicates this summary movement in graph form. Per Public Law 91-142, all these student movements are decided upon by group child study team decision. We do have a lot of I E.P. meetings for our students. Growing people require this.

THE SUCCESS PROGRAMMING CYCLE

As noted below in Figure 7, each student's program goes through the four phases of assessment, development, implementation and review. The order of these is important and helps cause logical growth for students.

Figure 7 SUCCESS PROGRAMMING CYCLE



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ASSESSMENT

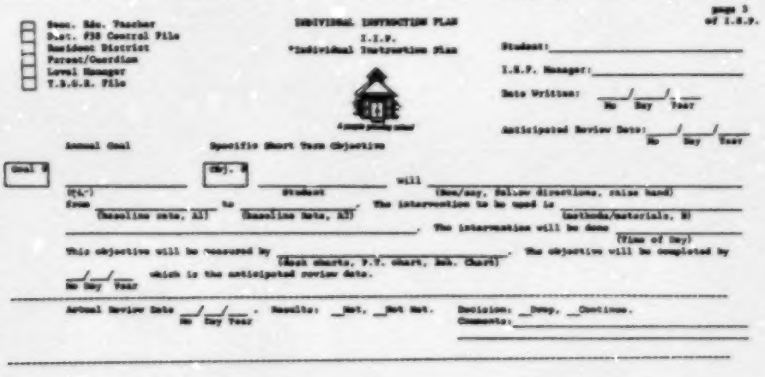
Individualized total treatment plan

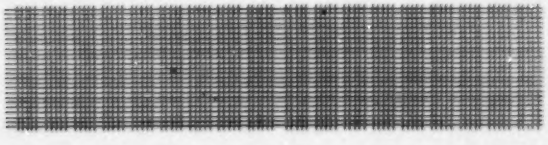
Individual Education Plan

The Ranch Assessment Center is located on the east part of the ranch campus. This is the entry step for each child. A treatment program for emotionally troubled youth cannot be implemented without assessing levels and writing the plan. Within the center is a full-time self-contained assessment classroom orchestrated by one of our certified special education teachers. The purpose of the classroom is to provide a comprehensive personal/social academic life skills assessment and the Initial Draft of the Individualized Education Plan for each student. Together the assessment teacher and staff, the ranch psychiatrists and the entire interdisciplinary team develop the Individual Total Treatment Plan, the "I.T.T.P.", and the educated compliment of the plan called the Individual Education Plan. Specifically this is called the "I.E.P.".

The major purpose of the Assessment classroom is to develop the I.E.P. The day the student comes out of the Assessment classroom the Special Education teacher has in his/her hand the I.E.P. - the bludeprint for the student. Figure 8 below is part three of the blueprint - the plan for the teacher.

Figure 8: INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN (page 3 of the I.E.P.)





Baseline charting
Self Esteem levels
Personal/Social Checklist
Strengths
Learning Speed
Learning Style
Precision Teaching
Summary Protocol
Redbook

While in Assessment, the students are observed for baseline behavioral observations. There is baseline charting. There is a determination of motivators for the student. Self esteem levels are determined. The Personal/Social Survival Skills Checklist is completed. In addition to that there is a psychoeducational assessment including discovery of strengths and weaknesses, learning speed and learning style. There is also an academic assessment using criterion referenced tests and norm referenced tests. Precision teaching probes are made. A Summary test protocol sheet is completed. The student redbook is completed while in Assessment. Assessment culminates in a formal psychoeducational summary write up by the Assessment teacher.

At the end of the 30 day assessment period, the Assessment staff meets with the potential teachers in a meeting entitled the Initial Child Study Team meeting. This meeting takes place the Monday following the psychiatric staffing. The receiving parent surrogate from the lodge and the receiving teacher and therapist, together with the assessment team put the finishing touches on the Individual Education Program. At this initial C.S.T. meeting the receiving teacher is given the responsibility and authority of being the "I.E.P. Manager".

I.E.P. DEVELOPMENT

The teacher is the "I.E.P. Manager"

The I.E.P. is Special Educations method for ensuring that the educational program does, in fact, meet the identified needs of each student. An effective, realistic I.E.P. is axiomatic for good programming. The I.E.P. includes current levels of performance, strengths and weaknesses, goals and short term objectives, specific behavioral objectives, work programs and staff responsibilities assignment. Page 3 of the I.E.P. is located above in Figure 8. A copy of all three I.E.P. pages and the Initial Placement C.S.T. form is included in the appendix. The I.E.P. is completed by a group process of members of the Child Study Team whose roles are: Special Education teacher, Administrator, Behavior Management

Specialist/School Psychologist, Parent or Surrogate and student. Other members are the therapist and any other specialist needed. We invite four times a year, resident districts and parents to I.E.P. reviews. Since we are a residential school and as such are a long distance from the home if their attendance is not possible we send the developed written form back for approval.

PROGRAMMING INTERVENTIONS: A TYPICAL DAY

Theoretical tenets form the basis for the synergy

This section is the most relevant section for the reader interested in what happens on a typical day for a student. As you read the narrative you may see that the practical things we do actually are based from theories of professional educators and psychologists. If you spent a day here you would see in action, basis tenets originally conceptualized by: John Dewey, Jerome Brunner, Hilda Taba, Lawrence Kohlberg, Ogden Linsey, Haim Ginott, Sidney Simon, Clark Moustakas, B.F. Skinner, Jean Piaget, Tom Lovitt, Kurt Lewin, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Nicholas Long, Rudolph Drekurs, William Glasser, Thomas Gordon, Nicholas Hobbs, Eric Berne, William Morse, Frank Hewett, Benjamin Bloom and Don Dinkmeyer. These tents mixed together form the theoretical basis for the synergy.

Our anti-burnout philosophy

A typical day starts with each teacher calling a lodge to find out how the youth are doing. Following the calls all teachers, administrators and secretary meet to share the reports. Last minute announcements of a change for the day are shared. This is a fun meeting - considered a refreshing, revitalizing way to start each day. It is part of our anti-burnout philosophy established below.

Following the meeting teachers go to their classroom for a planning session with his/her technician for the purpose of finalizing the diagnostic prescriptions for each student for the day. Each student takes six (6) subjects and is programmed for on a written basis by means of diagnistic prescription sheets. An example is in the appendix. This diagnostic planning session might include a discussion of a change of the physical classroom arrangement to meet the student's needs, or a new behavioral intervention program with a desk card and charting method might be designed.

We teach halls, assemblies, and principals

When students enter the classroom, the teacher greets each one individually The students then go directly to a designated place in the room to pick up either a point sheet or progress card. They then go to their desks. They are immediately given points, strokes in the form of points combined with higher level reinforcers for how they did on the greeting and opening part of the day. Following this, an opening flag ceremony assembly is held in every classroom. This assembly meeting is a positive structure method for starting the day. Our students have failed assemblies so we teach assembly behavior. We teach what they have failed. For example we teach assemblies, halls, restrooms, bus riding, principals, etc. One of our underlying principles is "If you have a problem make a curriculum out of it." We capitalize on the teachable moment.

If you have a problem, make a curriculum out of it

After the flag ceremony, the students come together into what is called a "class meeting". Class meetings have as their purpose planning the day, doing problem solving, or doing a structured learning or personal social learning skills. Our students come to us lonely and isolated. The class meeting is part of our anti-loneliness curriculum. Following the class meeting, the students go back to their desks for "precision teaching timings". This very powerful teaching tool is described in more detail below. All students are tested daily in Reading and Math. Following the testing they place the results onto six cycle logarithmic graphs. Teachers use the graph on a daily basis for academic decision making. For example, if there is no growth evidenced for three (yes, only three) days, the teacher changes the teaching/learning prescription. We do not wait 6 months for a standardized test for results. If we wait only three days we have a real bias for action and growth. Our expectations are high for ourselves and students.

The Class Meeting is part of our anti-loneliness curriculum

If there is no growth in three days, we change the curriculum

When the students are through with his/her precision teaching timing and charting, they look over their prescription sheets and start their lessons. Self start and on-task points are given throughout the day. The method of individualized instruction we use is called "Errorless Learning". A teacher typically teaches 48 subjects a day if he/she has eight students. Each student takes six subjects. This is no small task. Our model allows the teacher to do this. Using our model we have found that student time-on-task is much higher than the average community base student time-on-task. This may account for part of the 380% reading growth rate change in 12 school months for the average student.

Time on Task is higher

Students can "buy out" if they have completed their prescription. During this time they may go to a learning center or to another center within the classroom. A tutoring program is very active. In this program, students leave their room throughout the day to go tutor other students. Students may need to use the "regroup center"' in the back of the room throughout the school. There is one period in the day where it is required for 15 minute silent reading.

Students also check out of the classroom during the day for various kinds of therapy such as: verbal psychotherapy, family therapy, play therapy, speech therapy, special reading, workstudy, apprenticeships and recreation. Many of our students meet with our highly

Structured learning method

youthful, effective therapist three to four times a week. Throughout the day there is a self-control curriculum being taught to the students on an out-going basis. This is done through either a structured learning method within a class meeting or through teaching interactions. Roleplays and behavior homework assignments have been found to be invaluable in the teaching of the skill at the transfer/generalization level - the ultimate level we want our students to obtain with each skill we teach them.

We teach the basics of negotiation

At the end of the day, there is either an individual or classroom meeting closure session. During this closure students are engaged in conversations to process what happened throughout the day. It is a time in which points are added up by the student. If they are on the Progress Motivation System they negotiate with the teacher for how many points they earned. Negotiation is an adult survival skill. We teach our students the basis of negotiations. Following the negotiation, points are put into the "Bank Book" by the student and a School-Home Note Card is written, which is seen as the ticket out of the room, and the student leaves to go back to the lodge. The students go directly to the lodges at which point they give the School-Home Note Card to the lodge Unit Manager.

I.E.P. REVIEW

People growing requires I.E.P. meetings

I.E.P. review meetings are held four times a year for each student. At the meetings, the levels of performance on all goals, short-term objectives and specific behavioral objectives are reviewed. Twice a year pre- and post-testing using the Coppersmith Self Esteem Inventory, Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Section, the Brigance Test of Essential Skolls, and the Wide Range Achievement is done by the I.E.P. managers. Unless it is a very sensitive issue the student is at this meeting. The students are encouraged to take part in his/her own meeting. Teachers even do what we call "preteaching" prior to the meeting.

All students attend I.E.P. meetings

This technique involves the teacher coaching the student on how he/she can present his/her objectives and progress, etc. It is a good opportunity for student growth. Again, we want the student to obtain positive control over their lives. Charts are shared and decisions are made at these review meetings as to what needs to be done next in terms of changing the I.E.P. The summary review form for this meeting and results of I.E.P. review are located int the Appendix.

Daily each I.E.P. is reviewed at the end of the day by the team teachers and technician team. Prescriptions are written and plans are made for the followng day.

STRUCTURES AND PROGRAM

The Curriculum

Curriculum and teaching are in harmony

The curriculum in the self-contained classroom is totally individualized and is entirely based off each student's I.E.P. Curriculum and teaching are in harmony. All tooo often curriculum guides spell out context skills with little linkage to the "How To's" of teaching. Curriculum context must be related to the teaching/learning process. Individual learning styles and motivators, having been discovered in assessment, are taken into account. The I.E.P. Manager, the teacher, is in charge of all educational programming so that the I.E.P. goals and short-term objectives are being addressed. For older students, the I.E.P. is coordinated with credit eligible school courses from their residential school districts. Each student takes a basic course unless the team decides to place him/her into another course. The six basic courses are: Personal/Social Skills, Reading, English, Math, Life Skills, Social Studies, Physical and Health Education. Other offerings available are Print Shop, Auto Shop, Food Services and on-campus apprenticeships in landscaping, painting, carpentry, auto mechanics, butchering, building maintenance and office receptionist. The work program apprenticeship stations are considered extremely valuable for each student's education. We see ourselves as having the job of preparing our youth for forty-five years of work.

The I.E.P. Manager is "in charge"

Teaching the process is more important than just the facts

The social emotional curriculum taught is a most sophisticated program. The course is called Personal/Social Skills. All our students are very low in this area. We think self-esteem is learned, therefore, it can be taught. As noted above, each teacher writes a daily prescriptive objective to be worked on by each student for the day. Examples of these objectives to be worked on by each student for the day. Examples of these objectives are "greeting other", "saying five positive things about self", "accepting criticism", "following directions", etc. Through a variety of intergrated programs the student's school environment enhances growth toward these goals. Some of the vehicles to accomplish this are: daily classroom meetings, daily use of the motivation system, cross-age tutoring and daily school assemblies. The Life Skills and Academic curriculum focuses on teaching processes, not content. We really don't care too much if a student has memorized all the towns in Montana. We do care that he/she knows how to use a map to get to all the towns in Montana. Teaching the processes are more important than just facts. All teaching/learning episodes are designed to be useful for the student.

Transfer is the goal

Transfer is our teaching goal. The center of transfer is structure. Unless a skill or fact is placed into a structured pattern it is soon forgotten. An unconnected fact has a very short half-life. Teaching/Learning is context is essential. Action-oriented instruction is a

Teaching in context is essential.

key. We believe that unless the learner does something with the new information he receives, it is unlikely to affect him. Visual images are better than words. Feedback is critical. "Feedback is the breakfast of champions". Overlearning is important.

We also provide, in addition to classroom intervention, special reading instruction for the "lowest of the low" as we strongly believe in teaching students to read. In each classroom daily academic prescriptions are written for each student.

Unless the learner does something with the information, it is unlikely to affect him.

The teaching of self-control permeates the school. Our students come to us out of control. It is our job to teach them positive self-control. We teach self-control by meeting the basic needs of students and by teaching self-control in a formal manner. Human safety, physiologically and psychologically, is considered a very important bottom line-basic need. This need is taught by the use of Teaching Interactions, supportive physical placements with the discipline cycle and the teaching of the six steps of self-control. In fact, self-control is one of the 17 basic personal/social curriculum skills noted below in Figure 9 and in the Appendix under Personal/Social Skolls Rating checklist.

Figure 9: PERSONAL/SOCIAL SKILLS

Curriculum Area

17 Personal/Social Survival Skills

1. Liking Self (P)
2. Self Control Skills (P)
3. Self Responsibility (P)
4. Sense of Humor (P)
5. Personal Problem Solving (P)
6. Non-Verbal Body Language (P)
7. Conversation Skills (S)
8. Active Listening Skills (S)
9. Belonging Skills (S)
10. Respects Others (S)
11. Compliance with Rules and Authority (S)
12. Difficult Situation Skills (S)
13. Negotiation Skills (S)
14. Assertive Skills (S)
15. Conflict Resolution Skills (S)
16. Collaborative Problem Solving (S)
17. On Task Skills (P)

Teaching self control permeates the school.

The personal/social skills curriculum is the critical area for our students. A major teaching tool skill we use is called "Teaching Interactions" noted below. The tool allows us to teach when the "learning window" is open. The teachable moment is seized when there is a student problem. Learning from the situation is our goal.

If students are not able to maintain in the positive classroom environment we provide, they may go to In-School Suspension, Time-Out or Seclusion. They can choose to stay in the classroom, or they can choose, by their misbehaviors, to leave. Our model is set up for students to perceive life as a bunch of choices. Our students come to us with very poor skills in the area of decision making. We tell our students "I am in charge of your environment. You are in charge of your choices". Students are reinforced for walking down on their own to In-School Suspension as we encourage all positive student behaviors that are possible. After a successful time in the In-School Suspension area and a successful teaching interaction, the student is allowed to be included back into the classroom. This is a form of systematic inclusion and is an example of how the motivation and discipline system work together. The classroom is the most important reinforcing part of the school. This is called "Time-In". If time-in is not reinforcing then time out will not work.

Teach when the "learning window" is open.

Life is a bunch of choices.

Students take the same basic courses they would if they were in a less restrictive community school placement. Students grades 9-12 who are placed here by their resident district receive credits. District #58 uses the Standards for Accreditation of Montana Schools guideline for units of credit (I credit = 225 min./week). All teachers are certified Montana teachers with a K-12 endorsement in Special Education. Grading is based on criterion referenced evaluations. Since the district is a Montana accredited K-8 district, the resident district of older 9-12 students has some additional responsibilities. We want the student to be able to "keep up" with his/her high school class at the local resident school from which they came.

If "time in" (the classroom) is not reinforcing, "Time Out" will not work.

Our Prevocational/Vocational Curriculum is highly effective and geared toward our oldest students. Some of the specific vocational courses offered are: Printing, Auto Shop, Furniture Repair Shop, a Fast Foods course, Home Economics, Painting, Carpentry, Life Survival and Work Study apprenticeship. The school works closely with the ranch work program department as the learning of life-long skills is critical. We tell our student we are programming them for 45 years of work. Each student's I.E.P. provides the blueprint of what processes, skills and capacities the vocational instructor should teach in order to help each student know how to better negotiate in the real world. The entire I.E.P. is directed toward meeting the student's needs first and the subject second. A monthly competency based checklist is completed and given to the I.E.P. manager (the special education teacher) by each vocational or apprenticeship teacher.

The environment is the change agent.

The Physical Education Curriculum is an integral part of each child's programming. The effective and cognitive domains are not the only areas which receive accent in the student's educational program at Yellowstone Boys and Girls Rach. Each student participates in a planned physical education program each day. The program in physical education provides exercise designed to increase or improve physical fitness and develop skills with a carry-over value such as bowling, swimming, handball, tennis, basketball, volleyball, etc.

The physical education program also includes specific individualized adaptive physical education and recreation therapy as a result of the recommendations with the I.E.P. The complete physical education facility here at the Ranch includes a bowling alley, Olympic-size swimming pool, gymnasium, a playground area, a tennis court, baseball and football field. The recreation therapy program includes trained educators who are very willing to work with children at their level.

UNGRADED CLASSROOMS

We are a school without failure.

Life is a do-it-yourself package.

Ungraded classrooms are accepted structures here in the school. This philosophy allows each child to progress at his/her own rate. Progress is continual rather than in artificial steps such as eight grades at the elementary level and four grades at the secondary level. Each student proceeds as rapidly as he or she can and as slowly as he or she must. The program criterion based, hence no student fails. We are a school without failure. Every effort is made to keep each student on his/her instructional level and insure that he is not at the frustration level, where his assignment is too difficult, or at an easy level where his assignment is not tough enough. Classrooms are arranged by behavior and development needs not by grade levels. A major academic goal is to produce "self-directed learners". We teach our students that education/life is a "do-it-yourself package".

All teachers are trained precision teachers.

Data based decision making is an integral part of each students' programming. Behavior and learning is quantified onto charts whenever appropriate. All teachers are trained precision teachers. We utilize this powerful innovative construct to facilitate daily data based decision making. As precision teachers, each teacher samples daily how each student is doing in reading and math. In addition, pre/post testing is done with standardized instruments on self-esteem and academic achievement. In 12 months of education in our school the average student grows 2.4 years in reading (a 380% increase) and 2.2 years in math (a 360% increase) as evidenced by the IOWA Test of Basic Skills pre/post testing data.

The staff to student ration needed by the student is decided upon by the school treatment team. If the student can handle a ratio of I teacher and a technician to 8 students, he/she is placed directly into a Level IV classroom. Some students need an unbelievable amount of support. At the time of this writing two students are staffed on a 1:1 ratio. Yes, their sending districts have asked for new students to have their own staff. After the success gained with a more supportive staffing pattern is maintained, the student will move to a I:I within a classroom until the I:I has completely faded away. The next phasing is to a less supportive classroom with the least supportive having 2 adults and 8 students.

THE MOTIVATION SYSTEM

Expect the Best

The Motivation System of the school is a basic method of teaching self-esteem, of teaching needed survival behaviors and of helping maintain students in the classroom. The motivation system is the source of programmed positive stroking. The motivation system consists of three different systems, designed again, from most supportive to least supportive. Our goal is to wean students off of more supportive system. Movement from one level to another is earned by the student. Classroom management of student behavior is done by utilizing basic principles of social learning theory and contigency management.

Points earned at the end of each day are recorded in a bankbook. Students spend points in many ways as noted above. A very popular use of their earned points is the twice a month school auction.

THE DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

The purpose of discipline is to teach self esteem.

The discipline system and the motivation system are like the Chinese concept of Ying and Yang, they go hand in hand. Like the motivation system, the purposes are to teach self-esteem, to teach needed behaviors and to maintain the student in the classroom. The system is designed to help students take positive control over their lives and to help them make good decisions. Our students come to us out of control. We teach self-control in a systematic way. Both the motivation and the discipline systems use contingency management principles. "Time In" is the classroom, which is reinforcing. "Time Out" (the discipline system) will not work if "Time In" is not reinforcing. When students need to leave the classroom for discipline reasons, they are placed in the least supportive setting they need. We have a continuum of interventions. The most supportive placement we have is a locked seclusion room with the teacher holding the out of control student. The student in crisis has the priority. Since we view discipline to be primarily a relationship problem, the adult who is having the problem does the placement, monitoring and the teaching interactions with the student. The relationship - the all important bonding - is enhanced with this

The student in the crisis has the priority.

philosophy, which is very different from most school philosophies. We have found the combined use of a motivation system and a discipline system to be highly regarded by visiting educators.

Discipline is a relationship problem.

The tutor program is an integral part of the motivation system. Students earn the privilege of being eligible for the tutor program and contract to be a tutor. They help teach students at levels lower than themselves and receive recognition from teachers and students for their participation. This, in turn, helps improve their own self-concept. The research is clear that cross tutoring programs are very effective.

The relationship-the bonding-is enhanced with the discipline system

TEACHING SELF-CONTROL

Daily we teach an attitude toward decision making as it relates to authority. An example of one of our tools is called the "In Charge Card" which is a small card stamped on the front with the words "In Charge". On the back of the card it states, "I am in charge of your environment and you are in charge of your choices". This side is signed by the teacher. Our structured learning method of teaching the 7 steps of self-control noted in the personal social skills checklist has been deemed effective. We consider life being basically a series of many choices and we want our students to make good ones. We want them to perceive themselves as having the Locus of control.

In-Charge Card

Locus of Control.

CHANGING STUDENT

We teach our students to behave from two different orientations, internally and externally and as mentioned above. We want them to have positive control over their lives. We feel life is pretty much a do-it-yourself package and that they are in control of what happens to them to a large extent. The lodge staff, work and recreation program staff, and specifically each child's therapist work very hard on the belief system of our students.

People are more than just a set of behaviors.

We feel a person's belief system is very powerful. The eminent psychologist, William James, wrote "Man can alter his life by altering his attitude". We work very hard on getting our students to percieve the world as an exciting workable place to live. Internally we attempt to teach them to reach their belief system, their self-image and their world view by using techniques such as self-control curriculum, cognitive restructuring, verbal mediation, structured learning, teaching interactions, reality therapy and values clarification.

Feelings
Needs
Values
Beliefs
Behaviors

Externally, we teach them to have positive control over their lives by our use of applied behavioral analysis principles. The slogan "Catch Them Being Good" is critical. Positive feedback is considered the breakfast of champions. We want champions. When a motivator is used following an appropriate behavior we always pair the motivator with a more internalized reinforcer. For example, when a student earns some points for something he or she has done well, we pair with the points a social comment such as "Tell yourself you did a good job". We are cautious with the external praise. Our philosophy is to wean students who come to us very stroke deficient and very needy of a supportive motivation system toward a less supportive motivation system that requires a more internalized locus of control. We have found from experience that it is easier to act our way into a new way to think than to think our way into a new way to act.

Behavior and worth are not related.

From visiting our ranch you will see that we feel people are much more than just a set of behaviors. People have feelings, needs, values, beliefs and behaviors. Self-worth and behavior are not the same thing. It is our aim to teach our students to become good decision making people who are managers of their behavior.

EVALUATION/ACCOUNTABILITY

Evaluation ("in process", "pre/post", and "cycle back") for each child is a continual process. To supplement our day-to-day evaluation and daily prescription writing, each student is administered criterion reference and standard achievement tests. Clearly the former is more valuable. The interpretation of these tests assists in over-all program effectiveness. The school research and development program is set up to collect I.E.P. review results, precision teaching, motivation, discipline and self-esteem data for the purpose of establishing school norms. As evidenced by the above, the level of accountability expected of the teacher is very high.

The level of accountability expected of the teacher is very high.

RE-ENTRY CURRICULUM

An individualized re-entry curriculum is implemented for each student who is determined ready for a less restrictive placement and is ready to go into a regular community based

A bias for action

school. To enhance their survival, a re-entry curriculum is carried out by the teacher for the Level III status re-entry student. In a real sense the student now "tries out" for "town school", which is what we call our less restrictive Billings schools. Ideally a six-week long re-entry practice program includes everything from tours at the re-entry school to studying from the re-entry school's textbooks. Students now get to do homework. Yes, it is a privilege to do homework here. Doing homework is one of the highest status symbols in the perception of our students, as this means the student is close to going to "town school". This transition training into the environment from which the student failed prior to coming to the ranch is critical for the student's success.

BASIC ABC HUMAN NEEDS

Empathy is at the heart of all problem-solving.

Meeting basic human needs is a basic premise in the school. Administration is charged with meeting basic needs of all the teaching and support staff. The teaching staff is charged with meeting basic human needs of students. Psychologists have developed long lists of basic human needs. We have percolated to the top, three basic human needs. We focus on these daily. Below our ABC hierarchy is shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10 THREE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

Needs are the not same as wants.

We give them positive control over their lives

The bottom level of the ABC Human Needs chart, Self-control, is first. All human beings need to have positive control over their life. Our students come to us "out of control". It is our job to teach them positive self-control over their lives. The second level is Belonging. Is there any worse fear for any of us than being rejected, being isolated and feeling alienated? We teach our students how to belong. We teach personal social skills of belonging, of friendships and of connecting with others. In essence, we have an anti-loneliness curriculum for the entire school day. The human need at the top of the diagram is Accomplishment. All people need to have accomplishment, to achieve. We are a school without failure and have structured the school environment so that daily accomplishments on the part of the staff and students are numerous. We pass the word accomplished. We celebrate accomplishments. We want champions. We honor our champions. Positive feedback is the breakfast of champions. Figure 11 indicated the four most important words we have in our vocabulary in our school.

The four most important words are:

Figure 11:

"Catch Them Being Good"

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The growth of "champions"

Ongoing staff development is an integral part of each day. The programs are based on the philosophy that every person seeks meaning and that an effective school addresses human values at all times. We perceive the school as a site for the development of all staff as persons. The school logo states "A People Growing School". A school is not just a place for students to grow. All school productivity is related directly to the level of self-esteem of our staff. Within the staff development program is an Anti-Burnout component which is set up to remind administration to be constantly addressing basic human needs that all people have. These identified staff needs are: Control, Belonging, Accomplishment, Recognition, Humor, Emotional Energy, Technical Supervision, and Feelings of Support.

Validating people

The role of school administration is one of motivator, harmonizer and manager. It is our belief that self-esteem is learned, therefore, it can be taught. The administrator is charged with validating staff's feelings, listening, laughing, modeling a caring commitment, being the keeper of the dream, working on trustful and respectful relationships, raising the expectation level of all staff, expecting success, management by expectation, utilizing data based management principles, giving instructional strategies and helping teachers see that everything they do goes toward providing a classroom environment that facilitates students in their journey toward the attainment of academic and lifelong survival skills. We see a school as being an organic living entity. As with all living entities there are going to be problems to resolve. We have staff in-service on personal problem solving. Amongst ourselves we practive assertive problem solving, collaborative problem solving and conflict resolution. We don't consider people (ourselves) to be perfect. But we are improvable. We feel that if we are going to teach personal/social skills to our students we should be good at doing the skills also. We feel that true problem solving is one of the highest tasks we can do as an adult. We consider the concept of empathy to be critical as it lies at the level of problem solving.

We are not perfect but we are improvable.

A school must be organic.

Our staff development program occurs daily. Staff needs are identified and addressed. The anti-burnout program is the major task of the administration. At each Tuesday's faculty meeting, staff development programming is implemented. Weekly "idea sharing" sessions are held after school each Wednesday afternoon. Data based decision making is a constant goal. All staff development centers around human values and the goals of the school. In-service programs include: I.E.P. writing, individualizing, stress reduction, designing intervention programs, physical crisis intervention, human relations, problem solving, learning styles, teaching self-control, models of teaching and positive support strategies. High staff self-esteem is the glue that holds the school together.

Knowledge is power.

Increasing our knowledge of the teaching/learning process is a constant goal. We see people as information processors, using the industrial model we teach what we determine to be needed input, adequately processed through-put and appropriate output behaviors. Transfer and generalization of everything we teach is our goal. We choose to teach fewer concepts well, than lots of concepts poorly. Teaching contextually and not out of context is considered vital, as we feel a subject must be rendered worth knowing before there is learning. We feel all too often students get indoctrinated with dysfunctional concepts and beliefs. Facts do not live alone. They are subject to an interpretative matrix, hence the areas of perceptual psychology is important in effectively teaching emotionally handicapped youth. We teach them structures-concepts within which facts and skills fit. Problems must proceed answers which is why advice is seldom helpful to people. The staff is in constant search as we look for new and better ways to effectively teach our students.

We get indoctrinated with dysfunctional concepts and beliefs.

A subject must be rendered worth knowing before there is learning.

SHARED VALUES

A sound set of beliefs that are adhered to

Core values of the staff guide the school environment on a daily basis. We have a sound set of beliefs that are adhered to. These beliefs include: teaching self-esteem; respect for the worth and dignity of all people; a caring commitment; an actualized value of "Catch Them Being Good", expected student progress; expected team work; fact and data based management of all programming; a bias for action, which basically means that we try to get to the problem and fix it as soon as possible; acceptance and validation of individual differences; that kids needs are more important than staff wants; a developmentalism perspective that a school is organic and a living entity; that we take risks and "Go for the Gold"; that teachers have autonomy and are "in-charge" of their students programs and that making mistakes is okay. Instead of calling mistakes "errors", we call them "learning opportunities". The Appendix includes a longer list of identified shared values and beliefs.

Worth and dignity of all people

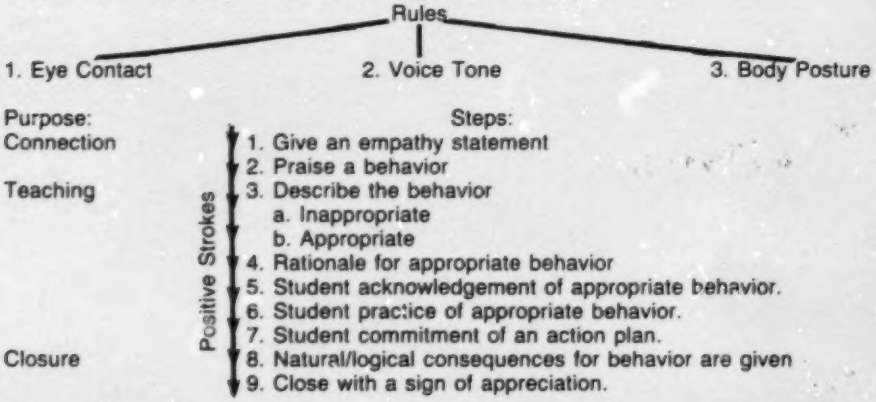
TOOLS SKILLS

Typically, teachers are blamed but not trained.

Two years ago, we percolated out what we call "tool skills". These are skills that each staff member needs to be proficient in order to practice our model. Current tool skills are underlined in this paragraph. Teaching Interactions, Motivation System (which includes negotiating the three levels and the contract and action plans) are tool skills. Another major tool skills is the Discipline System. This includes three placement levels using the forms, assault policy, a philosophy of support, physical crisis intervention and levels of intervention. Another tool skill is Physical Classroom Arrangement. This includes using such things as dividers, carrels, teacher desks, signs, rules, posted menus and chairs. A very important personal social tool skill is the Class Meeting, mentioned above. Also, Precision Teaching is used daily with all teachers. Behavioral Intervention Design and Programming is a tool skill. Life Skill and Academic Intervention Design and Programming is a most critical tool skill. Teachers are data based decision makers and as a result there is graphing and collection of data so that objectivity is enhanced. We have found that this is an excellent method of reducing any burnout or frustration as we are looking at facts and not just an emotional gut feeling about a person.

Effective teachers with high self esteem

Figure 12: TEACHING INTERACTION



OUTREACH TRAINING

Go For the Gold

Our Outreach Training Program is expanding. This program involves training and in-service for other educators. Some schools have written Federal grants to pay for the training we provide. The most popular training components requested are the motivation system, teaching interactions, behavioral intervention programming, the discipline system, physical crisis intervention and experiencing first hand our positive success-oriented school model. We give specific in-services on teaching self-esteem in the classroom meetings, Physical Crisis Intervention, Precision Teaching, I.E.P. Development and Implementation, Life Skills and Academic Intervention Programming.

COORDINATED MILIEU

A coordinated treatment milieu provides the climate for growth.

A coordinated treatment milieu provides a climate for growth for all children. School staff work closely with our psychologist, therapists, clinical coordinators, unit managers, parent surrogates, social workers, work therapists, recreation therapists, the two ranch psychiatrists and other ranch program personnel. (School, ranch and sending agency personnel meet at Individual Education Development meetings four time per year on each student, to coordinate programming.) 24 hour programming works. Each morning all teachers call the lodges to find out how the students are doing. At the end of each school day a school-note card is carried by the student back to the lodge. Each child holds a job at the ranch. Work Study stations are available for older students for credit. The ranch work program which is described in the ranch narrative is very highly regarded as a model throughout the United States professional community of residential treatment centers.

TEACHERS ARE THE KEY

A "significant other" relationship

Effective teachers are the most important ingredient

Effective teachers are the most important ingredient. They must be empathetic and loving. The relationship - the bond - with the students is critical. Our teachers are charged with establishing what we call a "significant other" relationship with each student. The teacher must be able to produce a personalized, caring, firm, supportive, structured environment for each student. This approach has been called "tough love". The teachers' basic belief systems about people needs to be positive and self-actualizing with a strong belief and commitment in the basic integrity of all individuals. We've found it helpful for teachers to have what is called "a high choice efficiency". They must be able to make many split-second decisions under pressure. They must be able to work cooperatively with many adults. They must be able to take risks. Above all, teachers must have a high sense of self-esteem.

OUR ANTI-BURNOUT PROGRAM

Pervasive Caring

How do we keep it going? We have a number of beliefs that are important to help us in the school. Clearly the most important one is the pervasive caring, for not only students but for staff. Stroking, the term from Transactional Analysis, is a very common term. "Catch Them Being Good" are our four most important words. There is a list of shared values in the Appendix section. Our staff has an agreed upon set of shared values and we actualize

Stroking

them. The anti-burnout program is most active. The administration is charged with having an effective staff. Staff are treated the same way as students. We attend to basic needs of accomplishment, belonging and control for staff. The above structures programs, people and mission all blend together to form our synergy.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

This is our philosophy and program: It is unique. It is humanistic. It is educationally sound. It is data based. It has direction. It meets human needs. It has content. It is process oriented. It is a school without failure. It works!

A people growing school

Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch School